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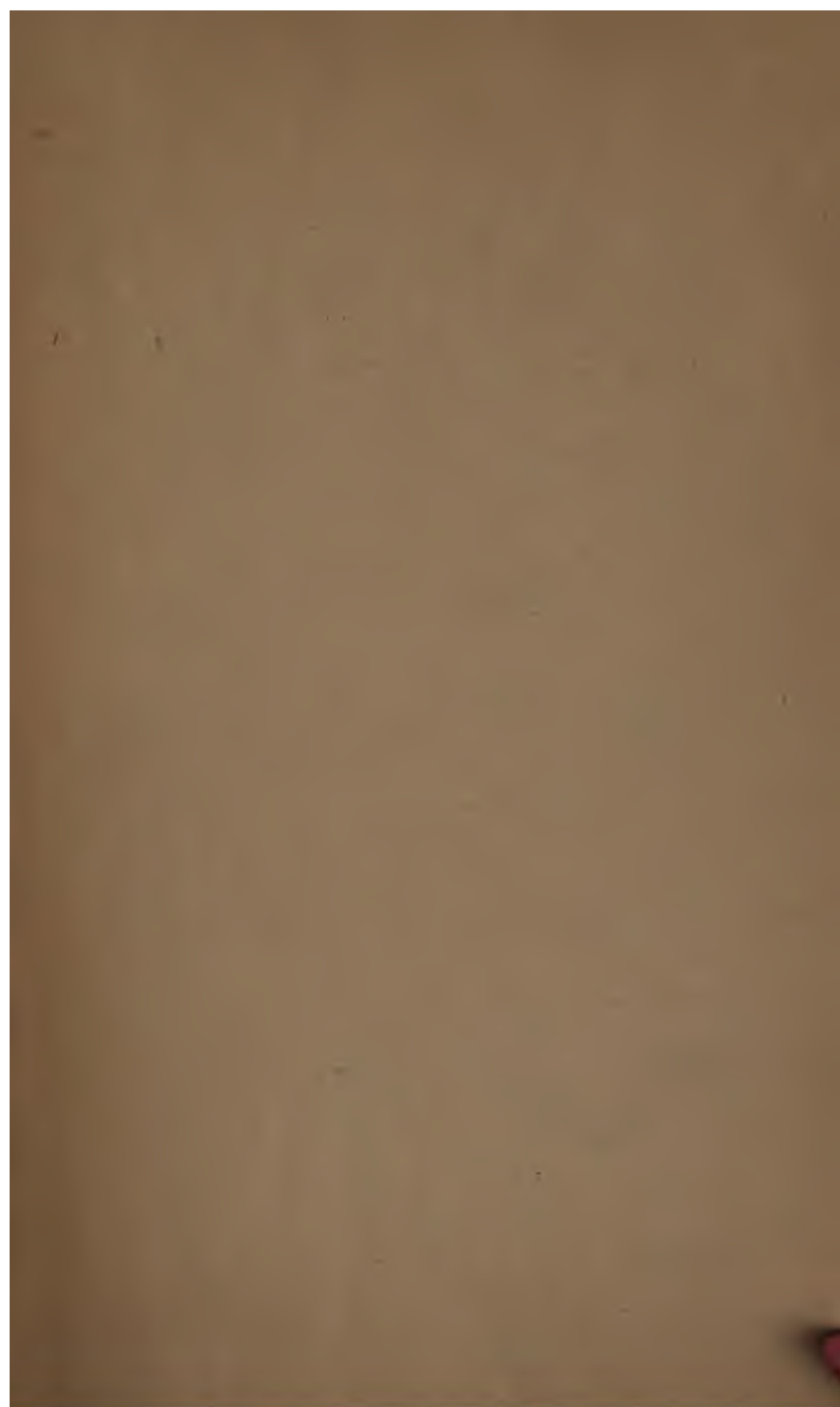


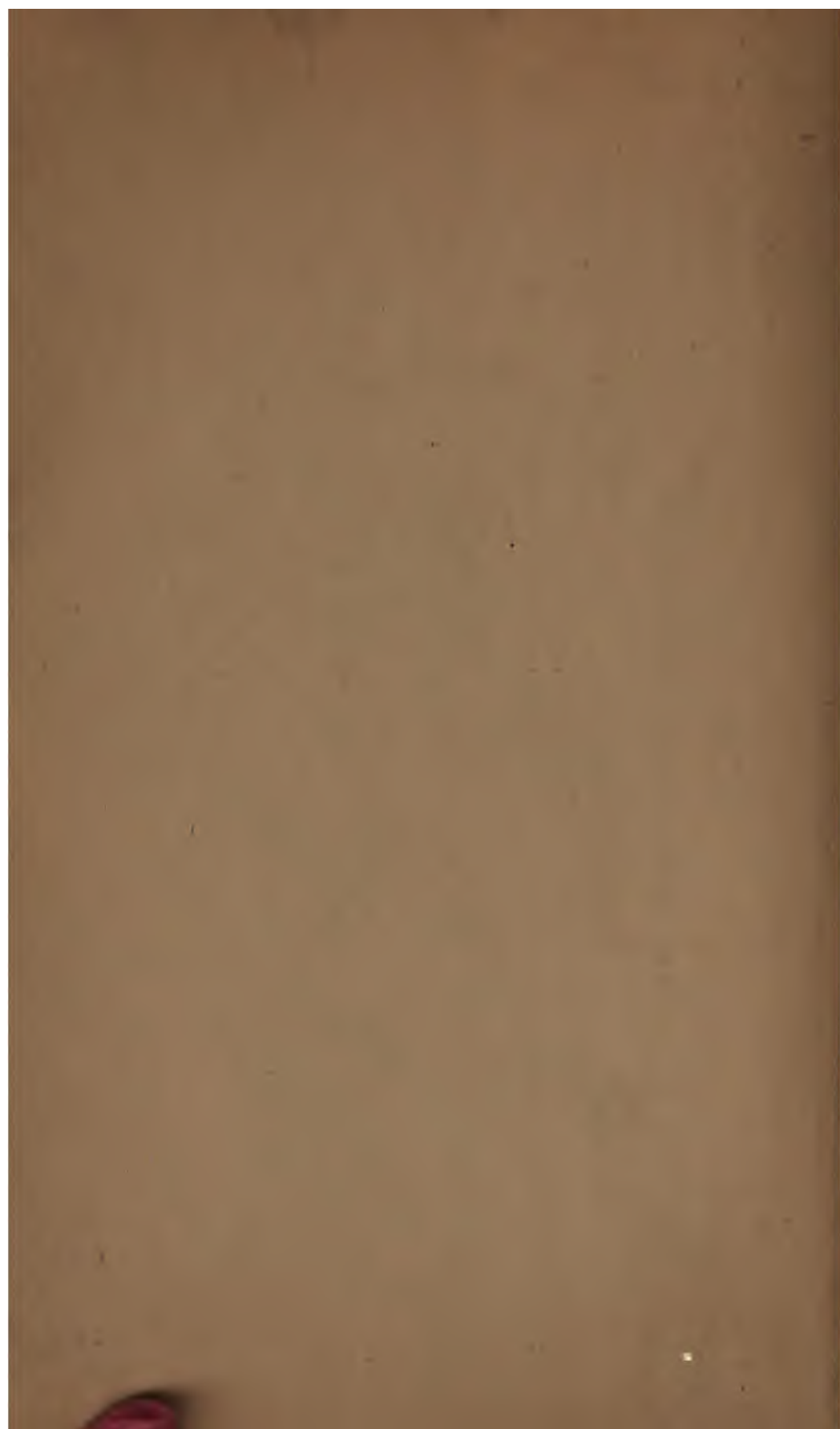
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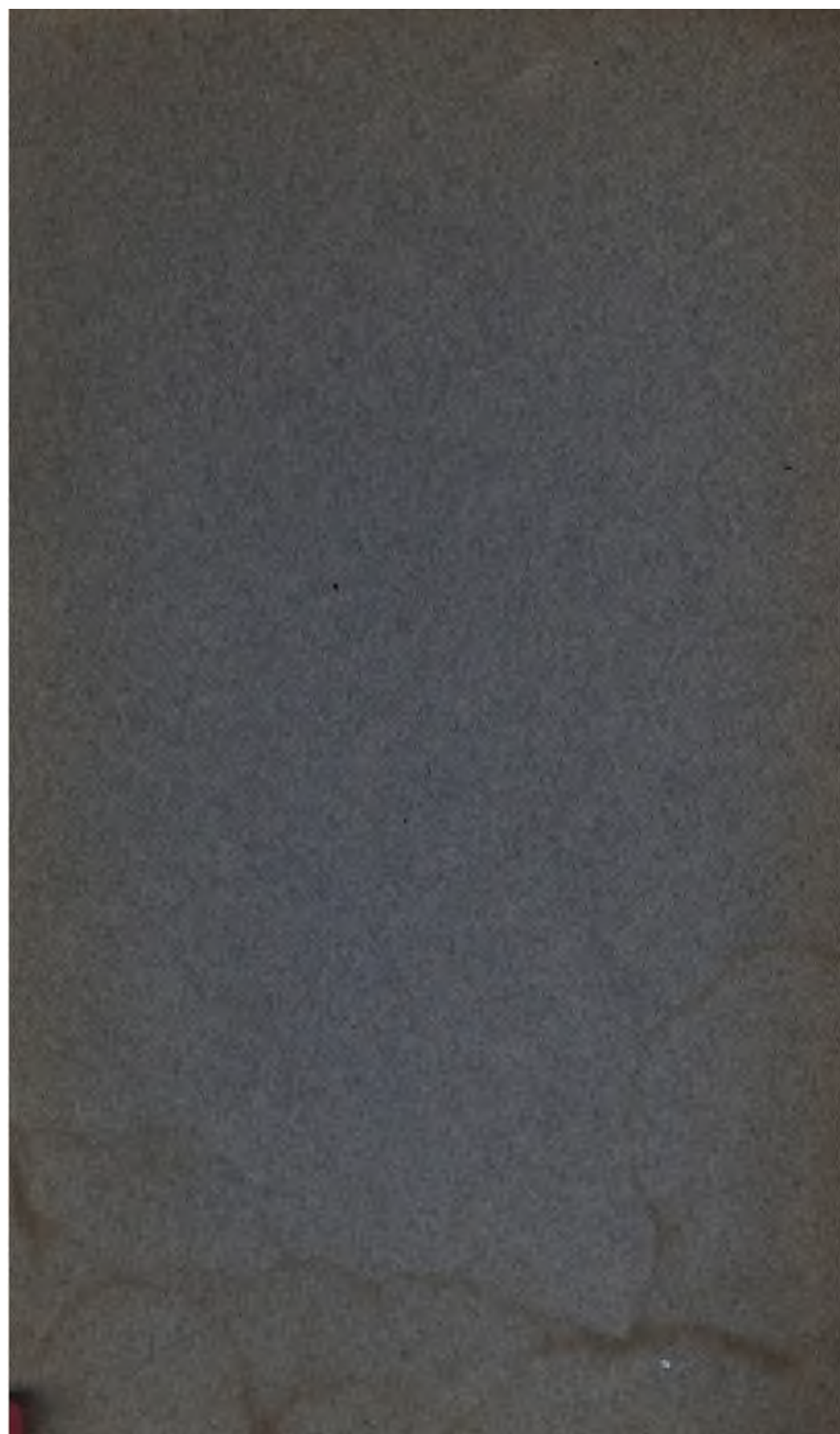
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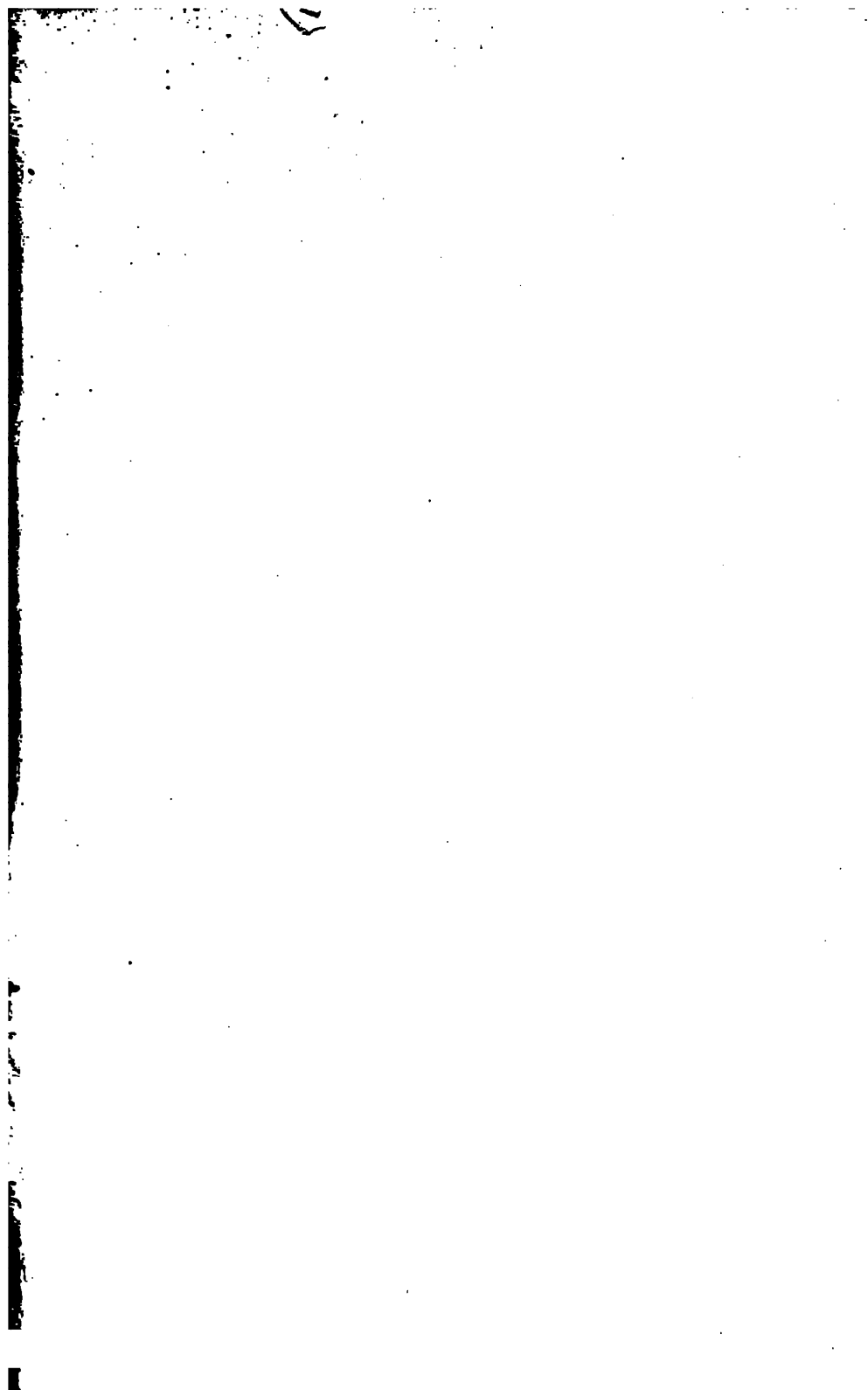
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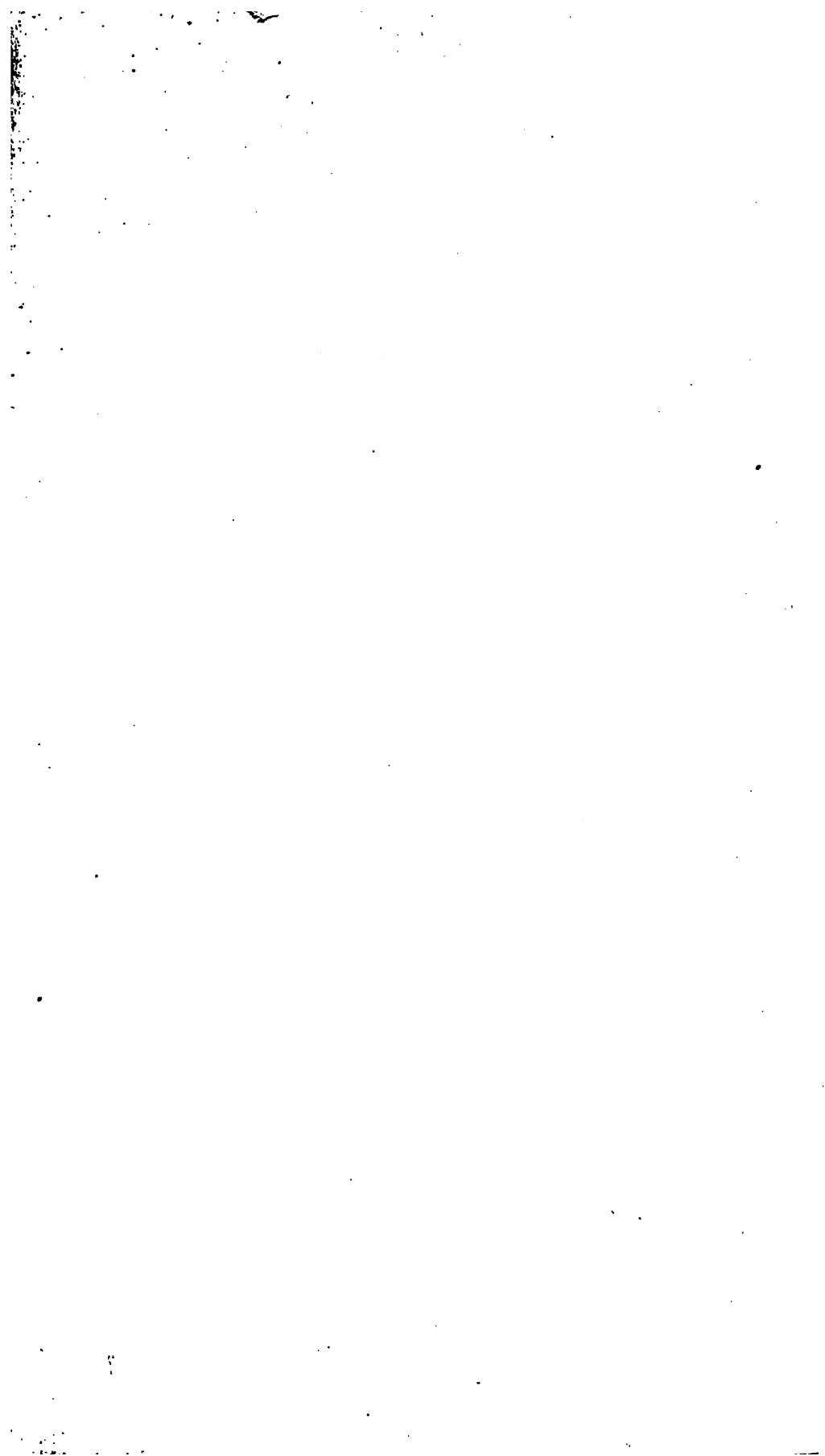
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Dickens's Doctors

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE
PHILOBIBLON CLUB

MAY 28, 1903



BY

JOHN CHALMERS DA COSTA, M.D.



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The Philobiblon Club

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Dickens's Doctors



CHARLES DICKENS was incomparably the master. His most notable strength was in the marvellous exactitude of his powers of observation. He saw a hundred things, where ordinary mortals would see but one. Pathos was his forte; humor, an integral part of his nature. The writings of no other man impress us so much with the close and vital relationship between humor and pathos. He was fond of oddity and revelled in the whimsical. He loved bravery, honesty, simplicity, and generosity, and always gave them praise. He detested falsehood, pomposity, meanness, presumption, and pretence, and abhorred all quacks and impostors with the hearty hatred of a vigorous, truthful, and clear-headed man. He never hesitated to attack wrong with splendid power, even though it sat upon a throne, and even though that throne were twined with the ivy of precedent and green with the moss of tradition. He was always examining, exposing, analyzing, dissecting, and cauterizing; and no one who merited it was too high or too powerful to escape exposure or castigation.

Dickens has given us numerous pictures of lawyers,

and he seems to have known the legal profession thoroughly, from its highest, the Lord Chancellor and Mr. Tulkinghorn, to its lowest, Dodson, Fogg, Brass, and Pell. We remember Uriah Heep, Spenlow, Jorkins, Stryver, and Vholes. We are obliged to acknowledge, too, that the majority of his pictures are the reverse of complimentary, although he names some decent ones, among whom are Jaggers, Lightwood, Perker, Wrayburn, Wickfield, Traddles, Sergeant Buzfuz, and Sergeant Snubbin.

For honest, virtuous clergymen he had nothing but regard; but he often paid his compliments to ranting and hypocritical preachers. He drew as types—which, we regret to say, are not uncommon in this country—Mr. Chadband, Melchisedech Howler, and Mr. Stiggins. Among the good ones we recall Septimus Crisparkle, and Frank Milvey.

It has occurred to me that it would not be uninteresting to learn his views about doctors, and discover what types of medical men he has drawn in his stories. In that early contribution known as the *Report of the Mudfog Association* we have set before us some physicians whose words and whose views are depicted in a spirit of the broadest caricature. The Mudfog Association was a meeting of scientists, assembled to discuss notable advancements and achievements, and the book is really a species of parody upon the proceedings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, which had then been but recently organized. For instance, at this meeting Dr. Kutankumagen, a distinguished practi-

tioner from Moscow, reports a case of extraordinary interest. He had taken a perfectly well man and subjected him for a definite period to the recognized treatment of blood-letting and purgation; and he reports to the society the interesting fact that, by persistence in these beneficial measures, he has succeeded in making his patient now able to walk about with the slight assistance of a crutch and a boy. He now eats little, drinks little, sleeps little, and never laughs.

Before this same association, Mr. Knight Bell reports the very remarkable case of an individual who had swallowed a door-key. When the post-mortem examination was made, an unscrupulous student took a cast of the mould in the stomach wall made by the retention of the key; he then had a door-key made from this cast, and by means of it succeeded in entering a house and committing a most extraordinary robbery.

Another gentleman reports to this association a peculiar case of monomania; and still another presents some interesting experiments upon a dog by means of Prussic acid. The dog objects, and the experimenter laments "that the interests of science should be sacrificed "to the prejudices of a brute creature." There is no character of a physician drawn in the article. With broad humor, Dickens satirizes some of the profound convictions of the time,—for instance, blood-letting and purgation. The papers show Dickens's abhorrence of the practice of vivisection, and his appreciation of the owl-like solemnity with which our learned bodies sometimes debate perfectly obvious propositions. He like-

wise laughs at homœopathy, by presenting Prof. Muff who sobers up on one twenty-fifth of a teaspoonful of soda water, and who advocates a diet for paupers of one-twentieth part of a grain of bread and cheese. The Mudfog papers are rarely bound up in Dickens's works to-day. They are well worth reading. They will be found in the "Gadshill Edition." They were originally published in "Bentley's Miscellany" for 1837-38.

In *The Uncommercial Traveller*, we find an article known as *The Great Tasmania's Cargo*. The cargo consisted of men starved to the last extremity because of the ignorance, the red-tape, and the incapacity of the officials in charge of the transports. In this article Dickens pays a tribute to the intelligence of the medical officers of Liverpool, who had the courage to denounce the official, Pangloss.

In *The Uncommercial Traveller*, in the chapter headed *A Small Star in the East*, Dickens showed that he had an appreciation of the good that the profession does; and we may read with pleasure his praise of the children's doctor, who realized to him the memory of the children's doctor that he had seen years before on the Paris stage.

Again, we find the picture of a doctor in another chapter entitled *Some Recollections of Mortality*. This doctor testifies at a coroner's inquest. The author describes him as follows: "He was a timid, muddle-headed doctor, and got confused and contradictory, "and wouldn't say this, and couldn't answer for that." I fancy few of us have attended trials in courts of jus-

tice and listened to medical men testifying without seeing a medical witness that answers pretty accurately to this description.

In the above story Dickens pays a fine tribute to a surgeon, Mr. Wakley, the coroner. He was patient and humane; and the author says that he felt grateful to him then, and does now to his memory.

Many of us remember when the Uncommercial Traveller returned to Dullborough Town, in which community he had passed his childhood days, although he had not visited it since reaching manhood. Dullborough is meant as the type of an ordinary country town, and Dickens says: "Most of us come from Dullborough who come "from a country town." The Traveller saw nobody he knew but a green-grocer, until he "was suddenly "brought up by the sight of a man who got out of a little "phaeton at the doctor's door, and went into the doctor's "house." He at once recognized the man as his boyhood's playfellow, Joe Specks, the individual who had once studied Roderick Random with him. The Uncommercial Traveller passed into a room which was half surgery and half study, and found it "bestrewn with testimonials to Joe. Portrait of Mr. Specks, bust of Mr. "Specks, silver cup from grateful patient to Mr. "Specks, presentation sermon from local clergyman, "dedication poem from local poet, dinner-card from "local nobleman, tract on balance of power from local "refugee." Mr. Specks entered, but did not recognize his visitor. The Traveller smiled and said he was not a patient, but Mr. Specks "seemed rather at a loss to per-

“ceive any reason for smiling in connexion with that fact.” The Traveller is finally recognized, is introduced to the doctor’s wife, dines with the family, takes part in a conversation about things in general, and leaves. Nor could he “discover one single flaw in the “good doctor” . . . “except that he had forgotten his “Roderick Random.” The Uncommercial Traveller went to the railway station to catch his train. Specks had intended to go with him, but was called away inopportunely. There is nothing characteristic in the above, except the appreciation of the local status of the country doctor, the rarity with which he sees any one but patients, the fact that he educates his son highly as a barrister-at-law, the dulling of the imaginative faculties of boyhood, by the exigencies of life, and his liability to be called out at any and all times.

In *Bleak House*, we find several members of the medical profession; for instance, Harold Skimpole, the child who had no knowledge of money, “had been educated for the medical profession, and had once lived, in “his professional capacity, in the household of a German “prince.” But as he was “a mere child in point of weights “and measures, and had never known anything about “them (except that they disgusted him), he had never “been able to prescribe with the requisite accuracy of “detail.” When he was summoned “to bleed the prince, “or physic any of his people, he was generally found “lying on his back, in bed, reading the newspapers, or “making fancy sketches in pencil, and couldn’t come.” Skimpole’s two chief characteristics, as set forth by him-

self, were that he had no idea of money and no idea of time. A man can practice medicine with benefit to the community, although he may have no idea of money; but it is needless to say that he cannot do so with benefit to himself. A man who has no idea of time is usually foreordained to failure in the medical profession. The elder Gross, one of the world's greatest surgeons, insisted on a punctilious observance of all appointments, was forgiving to many things, but not to avoidable lateness, and was accustomed to quote on such occasions, "punctuality is the politeness of kings."

It will be remembered by the readers of *Bleak House* that a poor and miserable law-writer, who called himself Nemo, lodged in the Rag and Bottle Warehouse of Mr. Krook. This strange lodger died, and Miss Flite, the unfortunate chancery suitor, ran out for a doctor, and returned "accompanied by a testy medical man, brought from his dinner—with a broad, "snuffy upper lip, and a broad Scotch tongue." The medical gentleman examined the deceased, and said, "He's just as dead as Phairy!" Mr. Tulkinghorn, the eminent legal gentleman, asked how long the man had been dead, and the testy practitioner said, "It's probable "he wull have been dead aboot three hours." This view is assented to by a dark young man who has just come in. "Air you in the maydickle prayfession yourself, "sir?" inquired the physician. The dark young man says that he is. "Then I'll just tak' my depairture," replied the other, "for I'm nae gude here!" The young surgeon examines the deceased, and recalls that he is a

man who has often bought opium from him. This young surgeon is Allan Woodcourt; and in this character Dickens would have been able, had he had the wish, to show some of the relations which exist between the good physician and poor patients. The author pays a tribute to this physician as a man whom the poor loved; he endeavors to show him as charitable, kindly, brave, and indefatigable. Woodcourt knows how to talk to the poor, being neither familiar nor condescending; yet it rather grates upon us to reflect that he sells opium to habitués. This man becomes a ship's surgeon, behaves with great courage in a wreck, returns to England, takes up practice, and finally marries Esther Summerson; but, as a matter of fact, he is throughout but a lay figure used to develop and bring out the plot.

Richard Carstone, one of the unfortunate wards in chancery, makes an attempt to study medicine, but gives it up because it requires too much effort; and in this connection the advice given him by Mr. Jarndyce would be eminently wise if given to-day to any medical student—advice which emphasizes the absolute necessity of being in earnest. Carstone undertakes the study under Mr. Bayham Badger, a surgeon of some note in Chelsea, who was connected with a large public hospital; but Mr. Bayham Badger shows us nothing of the characteristics of the medical practitioner. We learn that he was an honest man, because he advised Richard to give up the study of medicine, in which pursuit he was sure to fail. Mr. Badger thus lost a paying pupil. Mr. Badger is chiefly noted in the book as the third husband of Mrs.

Bayham Badger; and he is extremely proud of the fact that his predecessors have been such eminent men as Captain Swosser, of the Royal Navy, and Professor Dingo, who had had a European reputation.

Old Krook, the keeper of a rag-and-bottle shop, died of spontaneous combustion. He was sodden with alcohol, and burnt up, so that nothing remained but a cinder like a charred log of wood. Dickens evidently believed in the possibility of such an occurrence, and cites cases reported by Le Cat and others. In 1692 the subject of spontaneous combustion of the human body began to excite interest. An alleged case was reported in 1725, but the victim, the wife of the Sieur Millet of Rheims, was found only one foot and a half from the kitchen fire. (Tidy's *Legal Medicine*.) Tidy analyzes all of the alleged cases, and reaches the following conclusions:

I. There is no authentic case of genuine spontaneous combustion on record, although there are many authentic cases in which the clothing has been set on fire, and the body has been thus ignited. In some cases the body has been more completely burned than the clothing.

II. It is probable that the body of a habitual drunkard, especially if he is fat, is more inflammable than the body of an ordinary person; hence a spark or the upsetting of a candle might ignite such a body and it might be destroyed by burning.

The Mystery of Edwin Drood and *Great Expectations* contain no medical references. We may say the same of *American Notes*; though we find in this book a noble tribute to Dr. Howe, who trained Laura Bridg-

man, and also a strong commendation of the Medical Superintendent of the Massachusetts State Hospital for the Insane.

The Old Curiosity Shop has a touch or two of interest in matters medical. When Little Nell, ill and exhausted, arrived at the inn, the landlady gave her a drink of hot brandy and water, put her feet in a hot mustard foot-bath, tucked her up warmly in bed, and sent for the doctor. The doctor quickly arrived, and is described as a "red-nosed gentleman with a great bunch of seals dangling below a waistcoat of ribbed black satin." He entered majestically, seated himself solemnly by the bed, drew out his watch, and felt the girl's pulse. Then he looked at her tongue, then he felt her pulse again, and while he did so, he eyed the half-emptied wine-glass as if in profound abstraction. "I should give her—," he said, "a teaspoonful, every now and then, of hot brandy and water." The delighted landlady stated, "Why, that's exactly what we've done, sir!" The doctor had observed the foot-bath on the stairs as he came up, and his next order was to "put her feet in hot water, and wrap them up in flannel." He further directed them to "give her something light for supper—the wing of a roasted fowl." The landlady, affected with great personal gratification, announces that the chicken is cooking at the kitchen fire that instant; and the author goes on to tell us that the doctor might have smelt it if he had tried, and that perhaps he did. The doctor then arose, and with great gravity ordered for the patient a glass of hot mulled port wine. The landlady suggested toast

with it. "Ay," said the doctor, in the tone of a man who makes a "dignified concession." "And a toast—of bread. But be very particular to make it of bread, if you please, ma'am." The author describes the doctor as departing "slowly and portentously"; and the entire household was "in admiration of that wisdom which tallied so closely with their own."

There can be no doubt that the general public are particularly anxious to appear possessed of medical knowledge. They have an indescribable fondness for prescribing drugs and methods of treatment, and they simply delight in bestowing aphorisms and threatening admonitions. Just as certainly, there is no doubt that when one of these public prescribers happens to be right, he is complacently satisfied, and is inclined to regard the physician that agrees with him as a very knowing fellow; but that any educated medical man should grovel to this sentiment is unbelievable, even to obtain the regard of his patients and to have it said of him, as was said of Dickens's doctor, that "he was a very shrewd doctor indeed, and knew perfectly what people's constitutions were." In fact, many physicians grow restless, irritable, or actually ferocious at domestic suggestions and household medication, and thus awaken the enduring hatred of each old woman, who has had many children and is awful in her learning; and of each maiden aunt, who, it is needless to say, has not had any children, but who is simply terrifying in her profundity.

Little Dorrit contains a most atrocious medical black-guard. It will be remembered that Mrs. Dorrit, the

wife of that celebrated person who became the Father of the Marshalsea, was about to be confined. Dr. Haggage was a prisoner in the Marshalsea. When Mrs. Dorrit's confinement was beginning, the doctor and a companion were seated in a wretched, ill-smelling little room, engaged in playing at all-fours, smoking pipes, and drinking brandy. "The doctor's friend was in the positive degree of hoarseness, puffiness, red-facedness, all-fours, tobacco, dirt, and brandy; the doctor, in the comparative—hoarser, puffier, more red-faced, more all-fourey, tobaccoer, dirtier, and brandier. The doctor was amazingly shabby, in a torn and darned rough-weather sea-jacket, out at elbows and eminently short of buttons (he had been, in his time, the experienced surgeon carried by a passenger ship), the dirtiest white trousers conceivable by mortal man, carpet-slippers, and no visible linen." The turnkey summoned this pleasing scientist to attend Mrs. Dorrit. He jumped up instantly, characterizing himself as just the boy for a child-bed, and prepared himself for his arduous duties as follows: "With that, the doctor took a comb from the chimney-piece and stuck his hair upright—which appeared to be his way of washing himself—produced a professional chest or case, of most abject appearance, from the cupboard where his cup and saucer and coals were, settled his chin in the frowsy wrapper round his neck; and became a ghastly medical scarecrow."

The whole of the ensuing scene is very interesting. The progress of the doctor on his way to the patient's room; the excitement of the women; the retirement of

the men, because they felt at a disadvantage; the heat of the weather, and the sufferings of the poor patient, whom Mrs. Bangham was fanning with a cabbage leaf. Mrs. Bangham bestows incoherent comfort upon the sufferer, and comments upon the flies as follows: "What between the buryin' ground, the grocer's, the waggon-stables, and the paunch trade, the Marshalsea flies gets very large. P'raps they're sent as a consolation, if we only know'd it." Dr. Haggage assumes charge with the greatest cheerfulness, and says, "We are as right as we can be, Mrs. Bangham, and we shall come out of this like a house a fire." The author tells us that the most notable feature of the doctor's treatment was his evident determination to keep Mrs. Bangham up to the mark. He orders her to go outside and bring in some brandy, so as to prevent her giving in. Mrs. Bangham declines to bring in any liquor on her own account, but the doctor grows peremptory and says, "I am in professional attendance on this lady, and don't choose to allow any discussion on your part. Go outside and fetch a little brandy, as I foresee that you'll break down." Mrs. Bangham bows to this superior authority, and tells the doctor that he is looking poorly himself, and "If you was to put your own lips to it, I think you wouldn't be the worse." The brandy was obtained. The doctor gave himself a dose and administered one to the nurse, and repeated this treatment every hour, being very determined with Mrs. Bangham.

After some time, a little girl was born. The doctor announced the birth, and at once sent Mrs. Bangham

for more brandy, on the ground that without this potent reviver that good woman would inevitably have hysterics. The poor debtor paid the doctor; and the doctor, "who was an old jail-bird, and was more sodden than usual, and had the additional and unusual stimulus of money in his pocket," bestowed a piece of philosophy upon his client—a gem like those which dropped from the lips of Micawber, sayings which were probably resurrected from Dickens's early recollections of boyish visits to his own father when that gentleman was a prisoner in a debtor's jail. The poor debtor thanks the doctor, and says, "—though I little thought once, that——" The doctor interrupted him, and continued, "That a child would be born to you in a place like this? Bah, bah, sir! What does it signify? A little more elbow-room is all we want here. We are quiet here; we don't get badgered here; there's no knocker here, sir, to be hammered at by creditors and bring a man's heart into his mouth. Nobody comes here to ask if a man's at home, and to say he'll stand on the door mat till he is. Nobody writes threatening letters about money to this place. It's freedom, sir, it's freedom! I have had to-day's practice at home and abroad, on a march, and aboard ship, and I'll tell you this: I don't know that I have ever pursued it under such quiet circumstances, as here this day. Elsewhere, people are restless, worried, hurried about, anxious respecting one thing, anxious respecting another. Nothing of the kind here, sir. We have done all that—we know the worst of it; we have got to the bottom, we can't fall,

“and what have we found? Peace. That’s the word
“for it. Peace.” With these comforting reflections,
the doctor returned to his friend, his cards, his tobacco,
and his brandy.

A very different medical man in *Little Dorrit* is the fashionable physician that attended Mr. Merdle, the great financier. He is an educated, cultivated gentleman. He is described as a famous physician, who knew everybody, and whom everybody knew. He first appears after a dinner given by Mr. Merdle in his Harley Street house. A crowd of dignitaries are gathered in the drawing-room. The physician touches Mr. Merdle on the arm and asks him whether he is feeling any better. Mr. Merdle answers that he is no better. The physician says he must come to see him the next day. A lawyer and a bishop overhear a part of the dialogue, and each suggests to the physician a diagnosis and a plan of treatment; but the physician knows better, and speaks as follows: “Yes, yes, you are both right; but I may as well
“tell you that I can find nothing the matter with Mr.
“Merdle. He has the constitution of a rhinoceros, the
“digestion of an ostrich, and the concentration of an
“oyster. As to nerves, Mr. Merdle is of a cool tempera-
“ment, and not a sensitive man: is about as invulnerable,
“I should say, as Achilles. How such a man should sup-
“pose himself unwell without reason, you may think
“strange. But I have found nothing the matter with
“him. He may have some deep-seated, recondite com-
“plaint. I can’t say. I only say, that at present I have
“not found it out.”

It will be observed from the foregoing how little Dickens appreciated the imperative rule of professional secrecy. We cannot conceive a physician discussing, as an ordinary topic of conversation, the disease of one of his patients. It is quite needless to say that no reputable man would even think of doing anything of the sort.

This same fashionable physician, at one of Mr. Merdle's dinners, was asked by the bishop how to lessen that common disorder of young curates, relaxation of the throat. He answered that the best way to avoid it "was to know how to read, before you made a profession of reading,"—good, sound advice to those that contemplate a clerical career. Preachers as a class are notoriously the worst readers in the world.

When speaking of this fashionable physician, Dickens makes several statements which are eternally true. For instance, he describes a dinner-party at the physician's house, at which a number of prominent people were present. "Few ways of life were hidden from Physician, and he was oftener in its darkest places than even Bishop. There were brilliant ladies about London who perfectly doted on him . . . as the most charming creature and the most delightful person, who would have been shocked to find themselves so close to him if they could have known on what sights those thoughtful eyes of his had rested within an hour or two, and near to whose beds, and under what roofs, his composed figure had stood. But Physician was a composed man, who performed neither on his own trumpet, nor on the trumpets of other people. Many wonderful things

“ did he see and hear, and much irreconcilable moral con-
“ tradiction did he pass his life among; yet his equality
“ of compassion was no more disturbed than the Divine
“ Master’s of all healing was. He went, like the rain,
“ among the just and unjust, doing all the good he
“ could, and neither proclaiming it in the synagogues
“ nor at the corners of streets. As no man of large
“ experience of humanity, however quietly carried it
“ may be, can fail to be invested with an interest peculiar
“ to the possession of such knowledge, Physician was an
“ attractive man. Even the daintier gentlemen and
“ ladies who had no idea of his secret, and who would
“ have been startled out of more wits than they had, by
“ the monstrous impropriety of his proposing to them,
“ ‘ Come and see what I see!’ confessed his attraction.
“ Where he was, something real was. And half a grain
“ of reality, like the smallest portion of some other
“ scarce natural productions, will flavour an enormous
“ quantity of diluent. It came to pass, therefore, that
“ Physician’s little dinners always presented people in
“ their least conventional lights. The guests said to
“ themselves, whether they were conscious of it or no,
“ ‘ Here is a man who really has an acquaintance with
“ ‘ us as we are, who is admitted to some of us every day
“ ‘ with our wigs and paint off, who hears the wander-
“ ‘ ings of our minds, and sees the undisguised expres-
“ ‘ sion of our faces, when both are past our control; we
“ ‘ may as well make an approach to reality with him, for
“ ‘ the man has got the better of us and is too strong for
“ ‘ us.’ Therefore, Physician’s guests came out so sur-

“prisingly at his round table that they were almost
“natural.”

Dickens goes on to say that “Bar’s knowledge of
“that agglomeration of Jurymen which is called human-
“ity was as sharp as a razor; yet that a razor is not a gen-
“erally convenient instrument. Physician’s plain bright
“scalpel, though far less keen, was adaptable to far
“wider purposes. Bar knew all about the gullibility and
“knavery of people; but Physician could have given
“him a better insight into their tendernesses and affec-
“tions, in one week of his rounds, than Westminster
“Hall and all the circuits put together, in threescore
“years and ten. Bar always had a suspicion of this, and
“perhaps was glad to encourage it (for, if the world
“were really a great Law Court one would think that
“the last day of Term could not too soon arrive); and
“so he liked and respected Physician quite as much as
“any other kind of man did.”

It is this physician who, while reading late at night,
is sent for to go to a near-by bath-house; and in this
establishment he finds the body of the eminent Mr. Mer-
dle, the cause of death being suicide by cutting the
throat.

It might be assumed that the story of *Doctor Mari-
gold* in *Christmas Stories* deals with a medical man, but
it does not. Doctor Marigold was a Cheap Jack, who
was born on the highway, and who was called Doctor
Marigold out of gratitude to the physician that had offi-
ciated at his birth, “a very kind gentleman,” who
accepted “no fee but a tea-tray.”

Martin Chuzzlewit, which in many respects is one of Dickens's greatest works, contains the inimitable nurses, Sairey Gamp and Betsy Prig. Mrs. Prig was a hospital nurse that came from St. Bartholomew's. She had a voice like a man and a pronounced beard, and was very skeptical as to the existence of Mrs. Harris. Mrs. Gamp's nose "was somewhat red and swollen, and it "was difficult to enjoy her society without becoming "conscious of a smell of spirits." She lodged in Kingsgate Street, High Holborn, "at a bird-fancier's, next "door but one to the celebrated mutton-pie shop, and "directly opposite to the original cat's-meat warehouse." Were we dealing with nurses in this article, we should present these two distinguished persons at length, and gather some amusement concerning what the immortal Sairey calls "this Piljian's Projiss of a mortal wale." No story that has ever been written portrays so clearly the nurse of forty years ago. She was a hideous affront to intelligence and an insult to humanity, often dirty, generally unscrupulous, usually drunk, and always ignorant. The modern trained nurse is the antithesis of the old-time hireling. Well educated, clean, intelligent, refined, conscientious, she is truly the right hand of the physician.

At the funeral of old Mr. Chuzzlewit, Mr. Mould, the undertaker, with a tact that was habitual, pretended not to know the family physician, and fitted black kid gloves on the hands of that medical gentleman as if he had never seen him before. The doctor was just as particular; and though he and Mr. Mould were near neigh-

bors and very often "worked together," regarded that urbane funeral director with a look "as distant and "unconscious as if he had heard and read of undertakers, and had passed their shops, but had never before been brought into communication with one." The doctor, after much trouble, was arrayed in gloves, cloak, and hat; took some cake and a glass of port; and got into the carriage, while relating to Mr. Pecksniff an interesting episode in practice. This story continued without intermission during the progress to the cemetery. At the grave, Chuffey, the poor old faithful servitor, broke down and kneeled in the dust; and the doctor remonstrates because "it's a clayey soil," and endeavors to comfort the sufferer by telling him that his conduct is not only weak, but "bad, selfish, very wrong," because he is not connected by ties of blood with the deceased. After the funeral, Mrs. Gamp returned to her home at the bird-fancier's, and "was knocked up again that very night for a birth of twins; Mr. Mould "dined gaily in the bosom of his family, and passed the "evening facetiously at his club." The doctor "got "merry with wine at a wedding-dinner, and forgot the "middle of the story, which had no end to it."

We meet this same physician again, as the story advances. His name is John Jobling, Esquire, M.R.C.S. He was the Medical Officer of the fraudulent insurance company. We see him at lunch with the Chairman of the Company. It was the doctor who had suggested the advisability of taking lunch. He tells the Chairman, "if you don't make a point of taking lunch, you'll very

“soon come under my hands.” He illustrates this axiom by a demonstration of Mr. Crimple’s leg. He explains that in Mr. Crimple’s leg there is a certain amount of animal oil; and that if Mr. Crimple neglects his meals, the oil will become exhausted and “Mr. Crimple’s bones “sink down into their sockets, sir, and Mr. Crimple becomes a weazen, puny, stunted, miserable man!” Mr. Crimple becomes very indignant, resenting this personal application of scientific truths, and demands to know whether the same isn’t true of other people’s legs. Dr. Jobling was extremely fond of thus solemnly giving out medical information. For instance, after explaining that the medical profession is acquainted with many secrets of nature and that the general public knows practically nothing about this subject, he makes the following inquiry: “where do you suppose Mr. Crimple’s “stomach is?” Mr. Crimple was somewhat agitated by this question, and put his hand below his waistcoat. The doctor showed that this was a common popular mistake. Mr. Crimple said that all he knew about it was that he felt it there when it was out of order. “‘You think you “‘do,’ replied the doctor, ‘but science knows better. “‘There was a patient of mine once:’ touching one of “the many mourning rings upon his fingers, and slightly “bowing his head: ‘a gentleman who did me the honour “‘to make a very handsome mention of me in his will— “‘in testimony,’ as he was pleased to say, ‘of the unre- “‘mitting zeal, talent, and attention of my friend and “‘medical attendant, John Jobling, Esquire, M.R.C.S.,’ “—who was so overcome by the idea of having all his

“ life laboured under an erroneous view of the locality of
“ this important organ, that when I assured him on my
“ professional reputation, he was mistaken, he burst into
“ tears, put out his hand, and said, ‘ Jobling, God bless
“ ‘ you!’ Immediately afterwards, he became speech-
“ less, and was ultimately buried at Brixton.” During
the lunch previously alluded to, “ the Medical Officer
“ grew more and more joyous and red-faced.”

Jobling was a useful man to the Company. He had a large practice among well-to-do tradesmen, and the fact that he was Medical Officer brought considerable business to the concern. But Jobling was entirely too knowing to connect himself with the Company in any other capacity than that of a paid (and well-paid) official. He evidently estimated its financial standing at its real worth, and was extremely careful to explain to every one abroad that he was merely the Medical Officer paid by the month; that he never recommended any one; and that, as he had no head for figures, he knew nothing whatever touching the responsibility or capital of the Company. He would point out that the President of the Company was a remarkably handsome man, and quite the gentleman in every respect, who, he was informed, held property in India. He would then say to the person with whom he was conversing that if he should ever think of being insured, he would pass him beyond doubt, because he could conscientiously report him a healthy subject. During the lunch, a commission was paid to Jobling on four new policies. As he pockets the money, he says that it is really like robbing the Com-

pany to take it, because he don't recommend anybody there; but only tells them what he knows.

It is within the memory of the present writer, sad to say, that during the popularity of the "Get-Rich-Quick" concerns a few years ago, the attempt was made by these organizations to gain an appearance of respectability by having supposedly decent men for medical officers. More than one man, previously respectable, was seriously smirched by this connection. At this time, when insurance companies, at least in this part of the country, are closely watched and regulated, the existence of such a company as Dickens describes is practically impossible; and whereas Joblings may exist potentially, they do not have such a chance to be publicly recognized.

The physician who attended the stranger ill in the Bull Inn in Holborn; the stranger that was nursed by Mrs. Gamp and Mrs. Prig; is not even presented to us; for he simply drops in now and then and shakes his head, which "was all he could do, under the circumstances, and "he did it well." This physician orders that the patient shall be kept cool and quiet; that his draughts shall be given regularly, and that he shall be carefully looked to; to which directions Mrs. Gamp makes answer: "And as "long as Mrs. Prig and me waits upon him, sir, no fear "of that."

Mr. Lewsome, the mysterious patient, had been educated as a surgeon, and for some years had been assistant to a general practitioner in the city. He was a gambler and a drunkard, was accustomed to carouse with Jonas

Chuzzlewit, and had gone heavily into debt to that miserly scoundrel. Jonas used to talk about the desirability of having old Mr. Chuzzlewit die. One night he went to Lewsome and asked for two deadly drugs to poison cats. The drugs were furnished, with the proviso that Jonas forgive the debt. Thus Lewsome became the accomplice to an attempted murder.

There is nothing to show that Dr. Ginery Dunkle was a medical doctor. As far as the description carries us, he might have been a doctor of divinity, a horse doctor, or a corn doctor. He was a member of the committee that welcomed the Honourable Elijah Pogram. He was supposed to possess great poetical ability, and is described as a "shrill boy."

The only doctor in *Hard Times* is the nameless surgeon who cared for Stephen Blackpool when he was lifted, fearfully injured, from the pit. The only medical men in *Barnaby Rudge* are those that attended John Willet, reached the conclusion that he had a stroke of apoplexy and that he ought to die, and took it "very ill" that he did not.

In *Dombey and Son*, we meet Mr. Pilkins, the family Surgeon that attended Mrs. Dombey in her confinement and was so obsequious to the Court Physician. He had "regularly puffed the case for the last six weeks, among "all his patients, friends, and acquaintances, as one to "which he was in hourly expectation day and night of "being summoned in conjunction with Doctor Parker "Peps." Dr. Parker Peps was a distinguished practitioner who fashion demanded must be called in to assist

“at the increase of great families.” He is observed walking “up and down the drawing-room with his hands behind him, to the unspeakable admiration of the family Surgeon.” The following conversation takes place:

“‘Well, Sir,’ said Dr. Parker Peps, in a round, deep, sonorous voice, muffled for the occasion, like the knocker; ‘do you find that your dear lady is at all roused by your visit?’—‘Stimulated as it were?’ said the family practitioner faintly: bowing at the same time to the Doctor, as much as to say, ‘Excuse my putting in a word, but this is a valuable connexion’.” As a matter of fact, Mr. Dombey has not thought at all of the patient, and has thought only of the recently-born heir; and the question as to Mrs. Dombey comes quite as a surprise. He requests Dr. Parker Peps to walk upstairs again. “‘Good! We must not disguise from you, sir,’ said Dr. Parker Peps, ‘that there is want of power in Her Grace, the Duchess—I beg your pardon; I confound names; I should say, in your amiable lady. That there is a certain degree of languor, and a general absence of elasticity, which we would rather—not’—‘See,’ interposed the family practitioner with another inclination of the head. ‘Quite so,’ said Dr. Parker Peps, ‘which we would rather not see.’”

After pointing out some further particulars about the patient, the distinguished physician says that the only hope of a rally is that she will make a vigorous effort. “‘Mr. Pilkins here, who, from his position of medical

“ ‘adviser in this family—no one better qualified to fill
“ ‘the position, I am sure.’ ‘Oh!’ murmured the family
“practitioner, ‘praise from Sir Hubert Stanley!’
“ ‘You are good enough,’ returned Dr. Parker Peps,
“ ‘to say so.’ ”

The two medical gentlemen go into the sick-room and stand by Mrs. Dombey’s bed and look upon her compassionately. In the solemn stillness nothing was audible but “the loud ticking of Mr. Dombey’s watch and Dr. “Parker Peps’s watch, which seemed in the silence to be “running a race.” Mrs. Chick, a sister of Mr. Dombey, a domineering woman with the Dombey instincts, insists that the invalid must exert herself; but the sufferer does not even open her eyes until her little girl comes in, when a slight trace of consciousness is evinced. The poor woman’s eyelids tremble, the faintest shadow of a smile appears on her face, and immediately afterwards she dies.

When Paul Dombey grew into childhood, his health became feeble, and Mr. Pilkins ordered him sea air. He was therefore taken to Brighton, where he resided at the house of Mrs. Pipchin, whose husband had been ruined in the Peruvian mines. Later, Paul lived at the learned establishment of Dr. Blimber. At one time Paul was taken sick while at Brighton, and was attended by a “certain calm Apothecary,” of whom we learn nothing except that he was kind, thoughtful, and sensible.

When Paul, drooping and fading, was taken to his home from Brighton, he grew gradually but certainly worse, and was attended by “three grave doctors—they

“Used to assemble downstairs and come up together—
“and the room was so quiet, and Paul was so observant
“of them (though he never asked of anybody what they
“said), that he even knew the difference in the sound
“of their watches. But his interest centred in Sir Par-
“ker Peps, who always took his seat on the side of the
“bed. For Paul had heard them say long ago, that that
“gentleman had been with his mama when she clasped
“Florence in her arms, and died. And he could not for-
“get it, now. He liked him for it. He was not afraid.”
But in spite of these medical luminaries, Paul Dombey
died.

In *Nicholas Nickleby*, Sir Tumley Snuffim is a mere name. He attended Mrs. Wititterly, who was an unprincipled, superficial, stupid, socially ambitious, and hysterical female. Poor gentle Kate Nickleby was Mrs. Wititterly's companion; and Sir Tumley gave it as his opinion that Kate disagreed with Mrs. Wititterly's constitution.

Mr. Lumbey, the family physician of the Kenwigs's, is more distinctly outlined than is Sir Tumley. He is met with in the Kenwigs's sitting-room. He has just delivered Mrs. Kenwigs of a child, and he is resting from his labors with the new baby while he dandles the old baby on his knee. “He was a stout bluff-looking
“gentleman, with no shirt-collar, to speak of, and a
“beard that had been growing since yesterday morning;
“for Doctor Lumbey was popular, and the neighbour-
“hood was prolific; and there had been no less than
“three other knockers muffled, one after the other,

“within the last forty-eight hours.” The doctor tells Mr. Kenwigs that the new baby is the finest boy he ever saw in all his life.

The condition of affairs in the house was such as is commonly encountered to-day in such circumstances. “All this time, there had been a great whisking in and out of the other room; the door had been opened and shut very softly about twenty times a minute (for it was necessary to keep Mrs. Kenwigs quiet); and the baby had been exhibited to a score or two of deputations from a select body of female friends, who had assembled in the passage, and about the street-door, to discuss the event in all its bearings. Indeed, the excitement extended itself over the whole street, and groups of ladies might be seen standing at the doors (some in the interesting condition in which Mrs. Kenwigs had last appeared in public), relating their experiences of similar occurrences. Some few acquired great credit from having prophesied, the day before yesterday, exactly when it would come to pass; others, again, related, how that they guessed what it was, directly they saw Mr. Kenwigs turn pale and run up the street as hard as ever he could go. Some said one thing, and some another; but all talked together, and all agreed upon two points: firstly, that it was very meritorious and highly praiseworthy in Mrs. Kenwigs, to do as she had done: and secondly, that there never was such a skilful and scientific doctor as that Doctor Lumbe.”

Dr. Lumbe reminds Mr. Kenwigs that the new arri-

val "makes six," and that he will have "a fine family in time." Mr. Kenwigs thinks six is about enough. "'Nonsense! not half enough,' said the doctor scoffingly. With this, the doctor laughed; but he didn't laugh half as much as a married friend of Mrs. Kenwigs's, who had just come in from the sick chamber to report progress, and take a small sip of brandy-and-water: and who seemed to consider it one of the best jokes ever launched upon society."

When SMIKE, after his second escape from the schoolmaster, became ill, he was seen by a "physician of great repute," who gave the following extremely non-committal opinion. He said, "there was no cause for immediate alarm. There were no present symptoms which could be deemed conclusive. The constitution had been greatly tried and injured in childhood, but still it *might* not be." This seems to rank, though unintentionally, in the same class as the famous opinion of Captain Jack Bunsby.

In *A Tale of Two Cities*, Dr. Manette is a physician of Beauvais, who practised his profession in Paris, under the old *régime*. He became possessed of a terrible secret relating to a great and aristocratic family—a brutal barbarity that he declined to conceal. His bold and menacing attitude led to his seizure and incarceration in the Bastille, in which he remained for years. During this imprisonment, he lost his mind. The story of his release from the Bastille; of the slow reconstitution of his shattered reason; of his life in England, where he practised his profession; of the marriage of his daughter to the

son of the aristocratic scoundrel that had caused his imprisonment; of his journey to France and of his residence in Paris during the most bloody and dreadful scenes of the French Revolution,—though replete with living interest, does not in any way deal with his life as a physician, except that during his Parisian residence he was attending physician to several of the prisons; was treated with great regard and affection, as a former Bastille prisoner; and was respected, admired and tenderly loved even by the drunken, brutal, bloody mob of Revolutionary Paris.

In the earliest pages of *Oliver Twist*, the birth of the hero is carefully described. There was some difficulty in inducing respiration; and the author says that if “ Oliver had been surrounded by careful grandmothers, “ anxious aunts, experienced nurses, and doctors of profound wisdom, he would most inevitably and indubitably have been killed in no time. There being nobody “ by, however, but a pauper old woman, who was rendered rather misty by an unwonted allowance of beer; “ and a parish surgeon who did such matters by contract; “ Oliver and Nature fought out the point between them. “ The result was, that, after a few struggles, Oliver “ breathed, sneezed, and proceeded to advertise to the “ inmates of the work-house the fact of a new burden “ having been imposed upon the parish, by setting up as “ loud a cry as could reasonably have been expected “ from a male infant who had not been possessed of that “ very useful appendage, a voice, for a much longer “ space of time than three minutes and a quarter.”

The mother raised herself with difficulty in the bed and weakly asked to be permitted to see the child before she died. "The surgeon had been sitting with his face "turned towards the fire: giving the palms of his hands a "warm and a rub alternately. As the young woman "spoke, he rose, and advancing to the bed's head, said, "with more kindness than might have been expected of "him: 'Oh, you must not talk about dying yet.'" The surgeon picked up the baby and put it into the mother's arms. She kissed it and fell back dead. The surgeon announced that it was all over. Then, turning to the nurse; "'You needn't mind sending up to me, if the "'child cries, Nurse,' said the surgeon, putting on his "gloves with great deliberation. 'It's very likely it *will* "'be troublesome. Give it a little gruel, if it is.' He "put on his hat, and, pausing by the bed-side on his way "to the door, added, 'She was a good-looking girl, too; "'where did she come from?'" The old woman answered that the patient had been found lying in the street the night before; had evidently walked a long distance, for her shoes were completely worn out; and had been admitted by the overseer's order. "The surgeon "leaned over the body, and raised the left hand. 'The "'old story,' he said, shaking his head: 'no wedding- "'ring, I see. Ah! good-night.'"

When Oliver Twist was rescued from the peremptory magistrate, Mr. Fang, and was taken to the house of Mr. Brownlow, he became seriously ill; and as he improved, he became conscious of "a gentleman with a "very large and loud-ticking gold watch in his hand,

“ who felt his pulse, and said he was a great deal better.
“ ‘ You *are* a great deal better, are you not, my dear?’
“ said the gentleman. ‘ Yes, thank you, sir,’ replied
“ Oliver. ‘ Yes, I know you are,’ said the gentleman:
“ ‘ You’re hungry, too, an’t you?’ ‘ No, sir,’ answered
“ Oliver. ‘ Hem!’ said the gentleman, ‘ No, I know
“ ‘ you’re not. He is not hungry, Mrs. Bedwin,’ said
“ the gentleman: looking very wise. The old lady made
“ a respectful inclination of the head, which seemed to
“ say that she thought the doctor was a very clever man.
“ The doctor appeared much of the same opinion him-
“ self. ‘ You feel sleepy, don’t you, my dear?’ said the
“ doctor. ‘ No, sir,’ replied Oliver. ‘ No,’ said the doc-
“ tor, with a very shrewd and satisfied look. ‘ You’re not
“ ‘ sleepy. Nor thirsty. Are you?’ ‘ Yes, sir, rather
“ ‘ thirsty,’ answered Oliver. ‘ Just as I expected, Mrs.
“ ‘ Bedwin,’ said the doctor. ‘ It’s very natural that he
“ ‘ should be thirsty. You may give him a little tea,
“ ‘ ma’am, and some dry toast without any butter. Don’t
“ ‘ keep him too warm, ma’am; but be careful that you
“ ‘ don’t let him be too cold; will you have the good-
“ ‘ ness?’ The old lady dropped a curtsy. The doc-
“ tor, after tasting the cool stuff, and expressing a quali-
“ fied approval of it, hurried away; his boots creaking
“ in a very important and wealthy manner as he went
“ downstairs.”

Mr. Grimwig, the irascible and peremptory friend of Mr. Brownlow, entertained strong suspicions regarding a surgeon in the neighborhood. Finding a piece of orange-peel on the pavement, he came in in a state of

great indignation, saying that orange-peel was always lying about in the street, and that he was sure that it had been deliberately placed there by the surgeon's boy. "A young woman stumbled over a bit last night, and fell against my garden-railings; directly she got up, I saw her look toward his infernal red lamp with the pantomime-light. 'Don't go to him,' I called out of the window, 'he's an assassin! A man-trap!'"

When Mrs. Corney, the matron of the workhouse, was taken to listen to the death-bed confidence of the old crone that had nursed Oliver's mother, she found the apprentice of the parish apothecary warming himself in front of the fire and cutting a toothpick from a quill. They passed the compliments of the evening together, complained about the quality of the coal, and growled about the management of the board. The apprentice tells Mrs. Corney that the old woman is dying from a complete break-up of the system. This budding physician stands in front of the fire for a little time, actively using his toothpick; but, finding the situation dull and uninteresting, he wished Mrs. Corney joy of her job and took himself off on tiptoe.

After Oliver Twist had been shot during the attempted burglary, he was placed in bed in the house of Mrs. Maylie. The morning following the tragedy, Mr. Losberne, a physician, came to attend Oliver. He was a stout, eccentric, jovial, and impetuous old bachelor, who was loved and highly respected by the whole community. He complimented Mr. Giles, the old butler, on his marksmanship; and then went upstairs to see

the patient, talking all the time. He was absent for a long while, sending downstairs for his instrument-box, which was brought up from the gig. The bell was rung at frequent intervals; and the servants were constantly running up and down stairs, bringing things that he required. Finally he came downstairs with a mysterious look, closed the door carefully, and told Mrs. Maylie that the wounded marauder was not some large, hulking, black-browed villain; but was a poor, weak, miserable little boy.

The sympathy of the ladies was warmly excited for Oliver; but the matter was seriously complicated by the arrival of Blathers and Duff, the Bow Street runners, who had been sent for to investigate the crime, and who would be certain to take Oliver into custody. Mr. Losberne devised an ingenious plan to throw the officers off the scent and save Oliver from prosecution, maintaining that the lad had been accidentally wounded by a spring gun while trespassing upon some one's grounds; that he had come to the house to obtain assistance, and had been immediately taken hold of and accused by the butler, Mr. Giles. The detectives cross-examined Mr. Giles, who involved himself in such an extraordinary maze of contradiction that Blathers decided that he had been drinking, and Duff looked upon him as absolutely muddle-headed.

The only other medical appearance of Mr. Losberne is during the sickness of Rose Maylie. Although we see him frequently in the book, it is not in his medical capacity.

In *Our Mutual Friend*, we do not find any physician; but we do find a business man closely connected with hospitals and the medical profession. This is Mr. Venus, of Clerkenwell, who was accustomed to float his "powerful mind" in oceans of tea in his little dark shop. Mr. Venus's occupation was to prepare anatomical specimens; and in the course of business he had become possessed of the amputated leg of Mr. Silas Wegg, the literary man of Mr. Boffin. Mr. Wegg, having got on in life, and having obtained the position of reader to Mr. Boffin, feels that it is not respectable that his leg should be lying around in a shop; and he visits Mr. Venus, to make an effort to buy it. On entering the shop, Mr. Wegg greets Mr. Venus; and the latter gradually remembers who Mr. Wegg is. Mr. Wegg introduces himself by name, and Mr. Venus responds that he remembers that it was a hospital amputation. Mr. Wegg then propounds the following inquiry: "'Where am I?'" Mr. Venus makes answer: "'You're somewhere in the back shop across the yard, sir; and speaking quite candidly, I wish I'd never bought you of the Hospital Porter.'" 'Now, look here, what did you give for me?' 'Well,' replies Venus, blowing his tea: his head and face peering out of the darkness, over the smoke of it, as if he were modernizing the old original rise in his family: 'you were one of a various lot, and I don't know.' Silas puts his point in the improved form of 'What will you take for me?' 'Well,' replies Venus, still blowing his tea, 'I'm not prepared, at a moment's notice, to tell you, Mr.

“ ‘Wegg.’ ‘Come! According to your own account,
 “ ‘I’m not worth much,’ Wegg reasons persuasively.
 “ ‘Not for miscellaneous working in, I grant you, Mr.
 “ ‘Wegg; but you might turn out valuable yet, as
 “ ‘a—’ here Mr. Venus takes a gulp of tea, so hot that
 “ it makes him choke, and sets his weak eyes watering:
 “ ‘as a Monstrosity, if you’ll excuse me.’ ”

In *Sketches by Boz*, we find a few medical refer-
 ences. In the Story of *The Four Sisters*, the birth of
 Mrs. Robinson’s child is described. The fact was antici-
 pated by noticing “ that Mr. Dawson, the surgeon, &c.,
 “ who displays a large lamp with a different colour in
 “ every pane of glass, at the corner of the row, began to
 “ be knocked up at night oftener than he used to be; and
 “ once we were very much alarmed by hearing a hackney-
 “ coach stop at Mrs. Robinson’s door, at half-past two
 “ o’clock in the morning, out of which there emerged a
 “ fat old woman, in a cloak and nightcap, with a bundle
 “ in one hand, and a pair of pattens in the other, who
 “ looked as if she had been suddenly knocked up out of
 “ bed for some very special purpose. When we got up
 “ in the morning we saw that the knocker was tied up in
 “ an old white kid glove; and we, in our innocence (we
 “ were in a state of bachelorship then), wondered what
 “ on earth it all meant, until we heard the eldest Miss
 “ Willis, *in propria personâ*, say, with great dignity, in
 “ answer to the next inquiry, ‘*My* compliments, and
 “ ‘Mrs. Robinson’s doing as well as can be expected, and
 “ ‘the little girl thrives wonderfully.’ ”

In one of the *Tales* included in the volume of

Sketches by Boz, we are introduced to Dr. Wosky, who appears in *The Boarding-House*. He is described as "a little man with a red face,—dressed of course in black, with a stiff white neckerchief." He was well off. "He had a very good practice, and plenty of money, which he had amassed by invariably humouring the worst fancies of all the females of all the families he had ever been introduced to." For instance, to a selfish woman, fond of food, luxury, and ease, he gives the following advice: "'We must take stimulants,' said the cunning Wosky—'plenty of nourishment, and, above all, we must keep our nerves quiet; we positively must not give way to our sensibilities. We must take all we can get,' concluded the doctor, as he pocketed his fee, 'and we must keep quiet.'"

In this story of *The Boarding-House*, we are also introduced to Mr. Septimus Hicks, a student of medicine; but his adventures are amatory, and not medical. He is described as a "tallish, white-faced young man, with spectacles, and a black ribbon round his neck, instead of a neckerchief." After Mr. Hicks married, his conduct was not absolutely above reproach. The author dismisses him as follows: "Mr. Septimus Hicks, having walked the hospitals, took it into his head to walk off altogether."

The Black Veil, another of the *Tales* included in the volume of *Sketches by Boz*, is a peculiar story. On a cold, rainy evening, a woman came to a physician's office and requested the doctor to call the next morning and see a person that would, she knew, be by that time be-

yond all human aid; although she would fain think otherwise. The physician was amazed at a request for him to see a man the next morning, when that man was probably dying at the moment the request was made. Thinking the woman insane, he humored her, and promised to go. The next morning he kept this promise. On reaching the house, he found the man stone dead, the corpse having just been brought home after the execution. This story will not appear an absolute improbability to those Philadelphians who remember the elaborate preparations that were made before the hanging of Jerrold Eaton, and recall the prolonged attempt to bring him back to life, after the corpse, wrapped in hot blankets, had been driven madly from Moyamensing Prison to a house on Tenth Street. In the old days, before the drop was used, the neck was not broken; and now and then a person could be resuscitated. A notable instance of this occurred in Scotland in the last century.

In *The Hospital Patient*, one of the *Characters* included in the *Sketches by Boz*, we are taken to a Police-office, where a man is being examined on the charge of having assaulted a woman with whom he lived. Testimony had been submitted to prove that he had attacked her most brutally. "A certificate was read "from the house-surgeon of a neighbouring hospital, describing the nature of the injuries the woman had "received, and intimating that her recovery was extremely doubtful." The magistrates decided to visit the hospital and take the woman's deposition, and ordered that the man be taken there also. The man, in

the custody of an officer, was waiting at the hospital when the magistrates arrived. "After a short interval, "the magistrates and clerk were bowed in by the house-surgeon and a couple of young men who smelt very "strong of tobacco-smoke—they were introduced as "‘dressers’—and after one magistrate had complained "bitterly of the cold, and the other of the absence of "any news in the evening paper, it was announced that "the patient was prepared; and we were conducted to "the ‘casualty ward’ in which she was lying." The woman declined to charge the brute with having injured her. In fact, she declared that he had not and that he would not hurt her, and died with the vindication on her lips. We have seen more than one similar occurrence.

In *The Drunkard's Death*, another of the *Tales* included in the *Sketches by Boz*, the not uncommon feeling of the poor toward poor district doctors is shown by the father's attitude when he finds his daughter ill. He says: "You must get better somehow, for we must "have money. You must go to the parish doctor and "make him give you some medicine. They're paid for "it, damn 'em." That this feeling so often exists is due partly to the fact that a few—and, we believe, a very few—district doctors are harsh, unsympathetic, and dictatorial; but it depends chiefly upon the common human tendency to attach no value to what is given, to look upon a kindness extended as a right, and to regard the doctor that practises among them as extremely foolish and as a poor lot, anyway. In a Memoir of the late Dr. J. Mason Warren, of Boston, we find the following

anecdote, which exhibits something of this tendency. For many years, out of pure kindness, Dr. Warren had attended a woman free of charge. He had given her any amount of his very valuable time, and had not sought a penny of remuneration nor expected it. All this was at a time when he was the most distinguished surgeon in Boston. He then lost sight of the patient for many months. One day he met her and asked what had become of her. The answer was that she had thought it better to consult a pay doctor.

In *David Copperfield*, there is only one physician. During the trials and tribulations that attended the ushering of David into the world, Miss Betsey Trotwood, grim, rigid, and determined, sat before the parlor fire, stopping her ears with jewellers' cotton and waiting for a girl to be born. She had a presentiment that it must be a girl, and would not hear the faintest suspicion that it might be a boy. Mr. Chillip, the attending physician, having examined the patient, came downstairs and took a seat near Miss Trotwood to await developments. He is described as follows: "He was the meekest of his sex, the mildest of little men. He sidled in and out of a room, to take up the less space. He walked as softly as the Ghost in Hamlet, and more slowly. He carried his head on one side, partly in modest depreciation of himself, partly in modest propitiation of everybody else. It is nothing to say that he hadn't a word to throw at a dog. He couldn't have *thrown* a word at a mad dog. He might have offered him one gently, or half a one, or a fragment of one; for he spoke as

“slowly as he walked; but he wouldn’t have been rude to him, and he couldn’t have been quick with him, for any earthly consideration.” Mr. Chillip looked mildly at Miss Trotwood, observed with surprise her occupation with the jewellers’ cotton, and asked her whether it was “some local irritation.” Miss Trotwood pulled the cotton out of one ear like a cork and said: “What!” This alarmed Mr. Chillip extremely, but he repeated his inquiry. Miss Trotwood said, “Nonsense!” and corked herself again. Mr. Chillip was then called upstairs, remained there for quite a little time, and then came down again. Miss Trotwood uncorked her ear and inquired, “Well?” Mr. Chillip feebly said: “We are—we are progressing slowly,” whereat Miss Trotwood uttered the contemptuous remark “Ba-a-ah!” and corked herself as before. He was called upstairs again, was subjected to the same inquiry on returning, and made the same answer, at which Miss Trotwood snarled at him with such fierceness that he decided “to go and sit upon the stairs, in the dark and a strong draught,” in preference to remaining with her. Finally David was born, and Mr. Chillip came downstairs to tell Miss Betsey. “The mild Mr. Chillip could not possibly bear malice at such a time, if at any time. He sidled into the parlour as soon as he was at liberty, and said to my aunt in his meekest manner: ‘Well, ma’am, I am happy to congratulate you.’ ‘What upon?’ said my aunt, sharply. ‘Mr. Chillip was fluttered again, by the extreme severity of my aunt’s manner; so he made her a little bow, and gave her a little smile, to mollify her. ‘Mercy on

“ ‘the man, what’s he doing!’ cried my aunt, impatiently. ‘Can’t he speak?’ ‘Be calm, my dear ma’am,’ said Mr. Chillip, in his softest accents. ‘There is no longer any occasion for uneasiness, ma’am. Be calm.’ It has since been considered almost a miracle that my aunt didn’t shake him, and shake what he had to say out of him. She only shook her own head at him, but in a way that made him quail. ‘Well, ma’am,’ resumed Mr. Chillip, as soon as he had courage, ‘I am happy to congratulate you. All is now over, ma’am, and well over.’ During the five minutes or so that Mr. Chillip devoted to the delivery of this oration, my aunt eyed him narrowly. ‘How is she?’ said my aunt, folding her arms with her bonnet still tied on one of them. ‘Well, ma’am, she will soon be quite comfortable, I hope,’ returned Mr. Chillip. ‘Quite as comfortable as we can expect a young mother to be, under these melancholy domestic circumstances. There cannot be any objection to your seeing her presently, ma’am. It may do her good.’ ‘And *she*. How is *she*?’ said my aunt, sharply. Mr. Chillip laid his head a little more on one side, and looked at my aunt like an amiable bird. ‘The baby,’ said my aunt. ‘How is she?’ ‘Ma’am,’ returned Mr. Chillip, ‘I apprehended you had known. It’s a boy.’ My aunt said never a word, but took her bonnet by the strings, in the manner of a sling, aimed a blow at Mr. Chillip’s head with it, put it on bent, walked out, and never came back.”

In the *Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club*,

Doctor Slammer, of the Ninety-seventh Regiment, and his friend, Doctor Payne, are of interest only because of the ludicrous manner in which Doctor Slammer and Mr. Winkle became involved; but the real Æsculapian luminaries of this book are Bob Sawyer and Benjamin Allen, who are first encountered at Mr. Wardle's country place.

On Christmas morning Sam Weller brings some warm water into Mr. Pickwick's bed-chamber, and says to his master: "There's a couple o' Sawbones down-stairs," explaining that by a Sawbones he means a Surgeon, and that the specimens of the family then in the house are not "reg'lar thorough-bred Sawbones," but "only in trainin." Mr. Pickwick finally understands that two medical students are among the guests. He pays a cordial tribute to medical students as a class, and says: "They are fine fellows; very fine fellows; with judgments matured by observation and reflection; tastes refined by reading and study." Sam says to Mr. Pickwick: "They're a smokin' cigars by the kitchen fire." Mr. Pickwick strongly approves of this conduct. "'And one on em,' said Sam, not noticing his master's interruption, 'one on 'em's got his legs on the table, and is a drinkin' brandy neat, vile the tother one—him in the barnacles—has got a barrel o' oysters atween his knees, wich he's a openin' like steam, and as fast as he eats 'em, he takes a aim vith the shells at young dropsy, who's a sittin' down fast asleep, in the chimbley corner.'"

At breakfast Mr. Pickwick meets the students.

“ Mr. Benjamin Allen was a coarse, stout, thick-set
“ young man, with black hair cut rather short, and a
“ white face cut rather long. He was embellished with
“ spectacles and wore a white neckerchief. Below his
“ single-breasted black surtout, which was buttoned up
“ to his chin, appeared the usual number of salt-and-
“ pepper coloured legs, terminating in a pair of im-
“ perfectly polished boots. Although his coat was
“ short in the sleeves, it disclosed no vestige of a linen
“ wristband; and although there was quite enough of
“ his face to admit of the encroachment of a shirt
“ collar, it was not graced by the smallest approach to
“ that appendage. He presented, altogether, rather a
“ mildewy appearance, and emitted a fragrant odour of
“ full-flavoured Cubas.

“ Mr. Bob Sawyer, who was habited in a coarse blue
“ coat, which, without being either a great-coat or a sur-
“ tout, partook of the nature and qualities of both, had
“ about him that sort of slovenly smartness, and swag-
“ gering gait, which is peculiar to young gentlemen who
“ smoke in the streets by day, shout and scream in the
“ same by night, call waiters by their Christian names,
“ and do various other acts and deeds of an equally face-
“ tious description. He wore a pair of plaid trousers,
“ and a large rough double-breasted waistcoat; out of
“ doors he carried a thick stick with a big top. He
“ eschewed gloves, and looked, upon the whole, some-
“ thing like a dissipated Robinson Crusoe.”

The foregoing uncomplimentary portraits certainly
do not represent the average student of to-day, and

probably did not the student of that day. Nevertheless, we admit that the average medical student is unconventional and convivial and is somewhat given to nocturnal gaiety. The writer can admit this without being invidious, for he was a student himself.

At breakfast, Ben and Bob agree that there is "Nothing like dissecting, to give one an appetite," and enter into an appropriate breakfast argument about legs, arms, and brains. Ben asks Bob whether he had "finished that leg yet?" Bob says he nearly has, and that "it's a very muscular one for a child's." Mr. Allen states that he has put his name down for an arm; that they are "clubbing for a subject, and the list is nearly full"; but that, as, so far, no one would promise to take a head, Bob had better do so. Bob says he "can't afford expensive luxuries"; he wouldn't mind a brain, but he couldn't stand a whole head.

At the termination of the meal, Mr. Bob Sawyer, "enlivened with the brandy, and the breakfast, and the talking, gradually ripened into a state of extreme facetiousness, and related with much glee an agreeable anecdote, about the removal of a tumour on some gentleman's head: which he illustrated by means of an oyster-knife and a half-quartern loaf, to the great edification of the assembled company."

Bob Sawyer lived in Lant Street in the Borough, in the house of Mrs. Raddle. He determined to give a bachelor's party, to which Mr. Pickwick was invited. Just before the guests arrived, Mrs. Raddle came up, fierce and denunciatory, and demanded her back rent.

After a tremendous blow-up, she burst into an hysterical fit of weeping, threw down all the umbrellas, and disappeared into the back parlour, closing the door after her with an awful crash.

At this party, Jack Hopkins tells the credulous Mr. Pickwick of a wonderful case illustrating the surgical skill of Mr. Slasher, a good operator; and also gives the clinical history of a boy who had swallowed his sister's necklace of wooden beads. While in the hospital, it was found necessary to "muffle him in a watchman's "coat"; because, as he walked about, the rattling of the beads in his stomach made "such a devil of a noise" that it was feared he would wake the patients.

A "prim personage in clean linen and cloth boots" commences a long story which he has been in the habit of telling with great applause for ten years, "but for "the life of him he couldn't recollect at that precise "moment what the anecdote was."

A "scorbutic youth in a long stock" becomes involved in a row with Mr. Gunter. The warm water for the punch is intercepted by Mrs. Raddle; and finally the voice of Mrs. Raddle is heard screaming Mr. Sawyer's name, ordering the company out, and complaining about being swindled out of her rent. The guests rapidly depart, the prim man being particularly indignant because he was just beginning to have a dawning recollection of the story he had forgotten.

Mr. Ben Allen was much inebriated and "knocked "double knocks at the door of the Borough Market "office, and took short naps on the steps, alternately,

“until daybreak, under the firm impression that he lived there, and had forgotten the key.”

After Bob had finished his medical studies, he practised in Bristol; and Ben spent much time there, “waver-
“ering between intoxication partial, and intoxication
“complete.” Bob adopted various expedients to obtain practice. The lamplighter was paid “eighteenpence a
“week to pull the night-bell for ten minutes every
“time” he went his round. A boy of the establishment would rush into church just before the psalms with
“horror and dismay depicted on his countenance,” and call Mr. Sawyer out. Everybody would say, “What a
“business that young man has!” But half the drawers in the shop did not open and the other half had nothing in them. There was, in the words of Bob, “hardly any-
“thing real in the shop but the leeches, and *they* are
“second-hand,” The patients he did have never paid, under any circumstances. He finally went away on a jaunt with Mr. Pickwick. Mr. Pickwick remonstrates with Bob for leaving his patients without anybody to attend them.

“‘Why not?’ asked Bob, in reply. ‘I shall save by
“‘it, you know. None of them ever pay. Besides,’ said
“Bob, lowering his voice to a confidential whisper, ‘they
“‘will be all the better for it; for, being nearly out of
“‘drugs, and not able to increase my account just now,
“‘I should have been obliged to give them calomel all
“‘round, and it would have been certain to have dis-
“‘agreed with some of them. So it’s all for the best.’”

Bob wafers a notice on his office door. The notice

reads: "Sawyer, late Nockemorf. Enquire of Mrs. Cripps, over the way." Mrs. Cripps was the mother of Bob's office-boy, and was directed to say to anxious questioners that Mr. Sawyer was very sorry but there was to be a "tremendous operation," and he had been called to attend "a consultation of the very first surgeons in the country." Bob says: "It'll do me more good than otherwise, I expect. If it gets into one of the local papers, it will be the making of me."

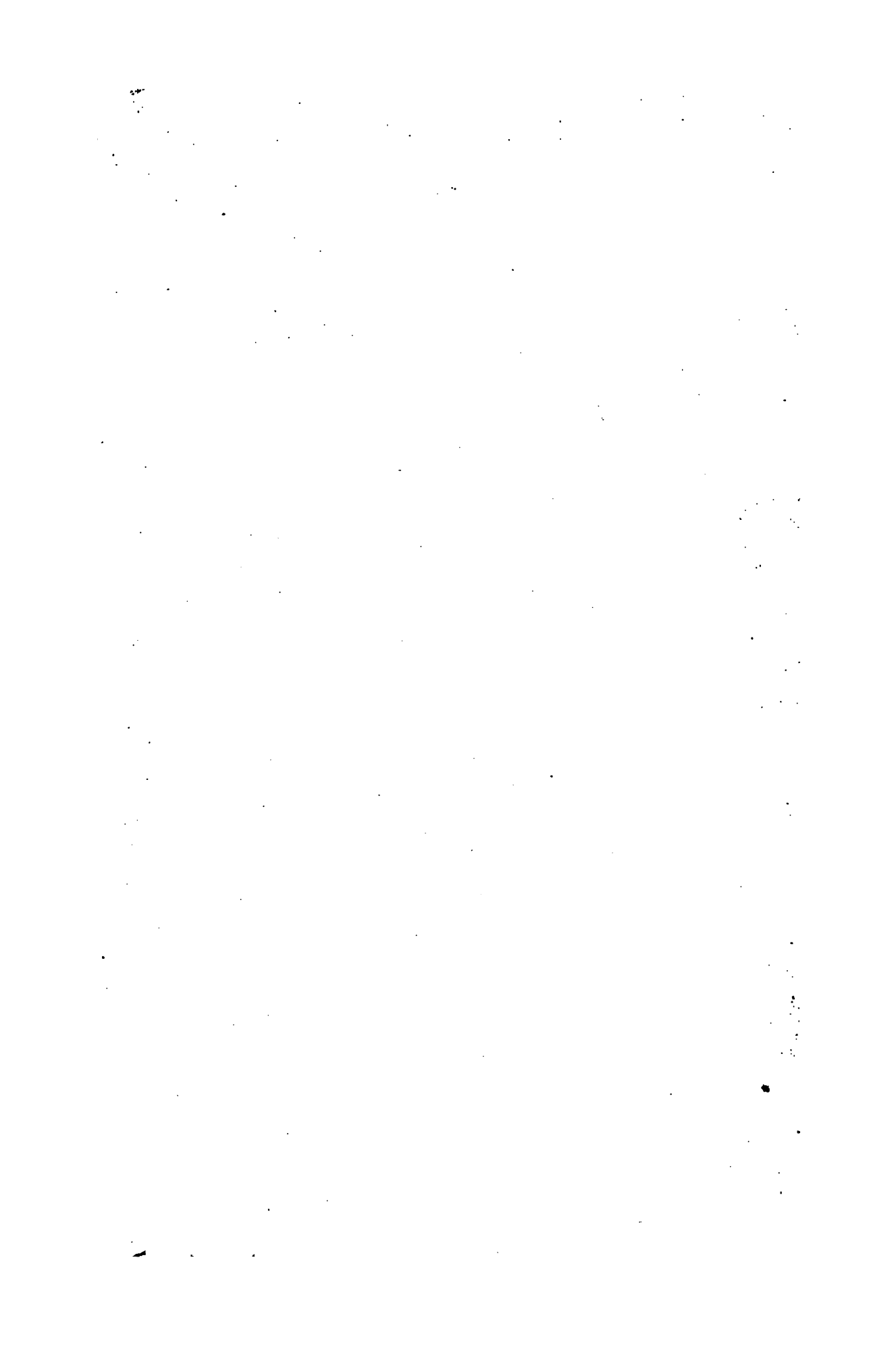
Bob and Ben went through many interesting adventures together, and finally received surgical appointments from the East India Company and passed over to Bengal. "They each had the yellow fever fourteen times, and then resolved to try a little abstinence; since which period, they have been doing well."

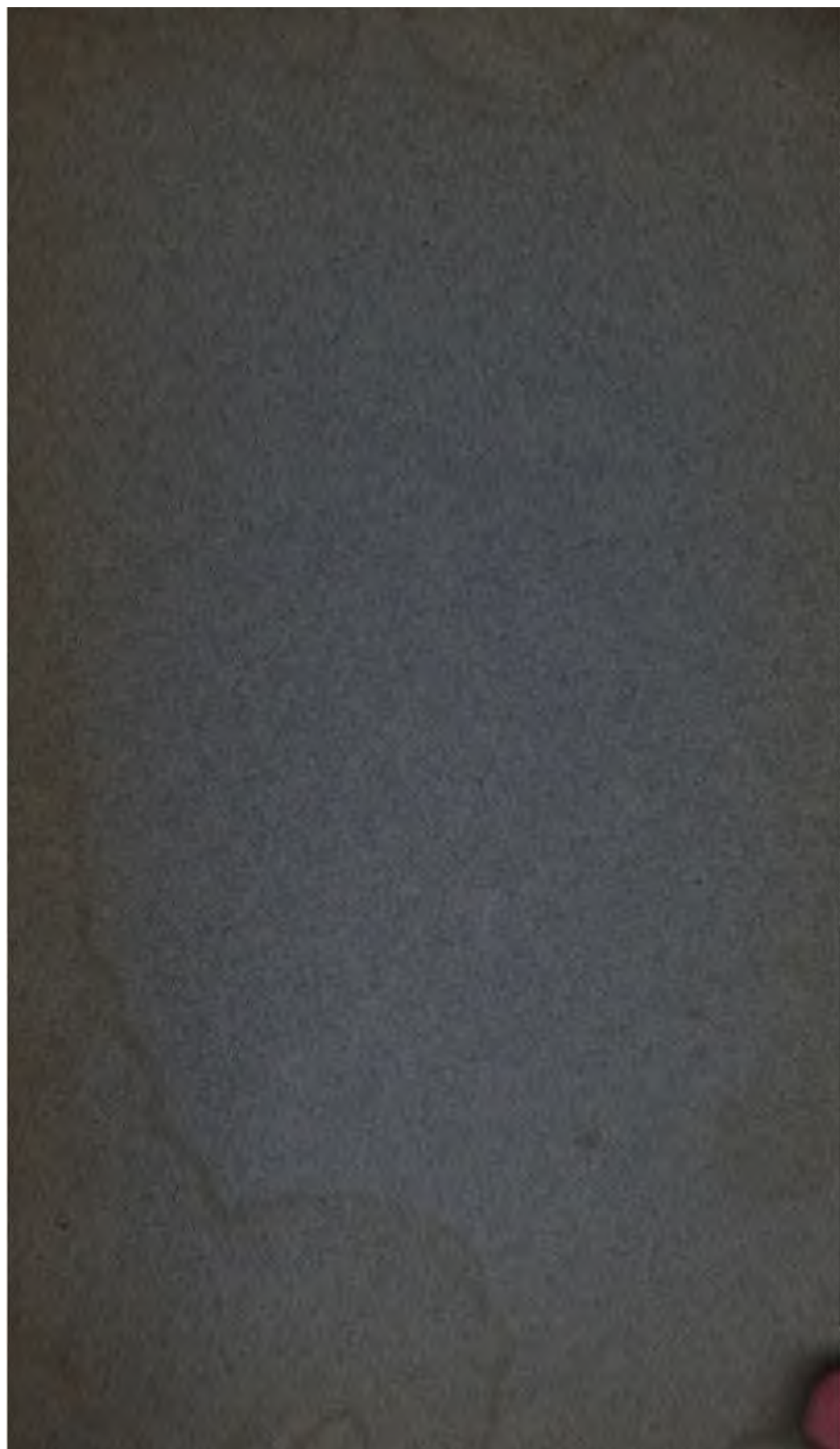
Such are Dickens's Doctors—fools, drunkards, blackguards, criminals, coarse, common, ignorant men, impostors, solemn ignoramuses, clowns, and a few gentlemen. Truly, as a general thing he has not been complimentary. Most of his pictures are broad caricatures, in which a single failing is exaggerated into the essential part of the man. There is some truth in his amusing pictures of professional solemnity and owl-like assumption of almost superhuman wisdom. Let us profit by the sketch.

But Dickens has not used to the best, except from a humorous point of view, the mighty life experiences of a busy doctor. He has not understood the weary years of toil, the perplexities, the period of hope deferred which

maketh the heart sick, while waiting for recognition, the trials of a brave and worthy man who sees the shallow trickster preferred and successful, the physical tire, the mental exhaustion, the corroding anxiety that knows no end, the sights that stir pity and the words that awaken sympathy, the failure in spite of effort and the success snatched at last from the reluctant hands of fate, the vast power for good or evil, the heart-break that ensues upon failure, and the disenchantment that too often follows success. It is all there, the tragedy, the comedy, the farce; and he just hints at it in his description of the fashionable physician in *Little Dorrit*; but he scarcely tapped this mine of precious wealth. What a pity that he never delineated such a lion-heart as Abernethy's, such a lordly soul as Hunter's, such a noble career as Paget's, or such a helpful life as Gross's. The world will always be the poorer because he did not.













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